



October 20, 2016

Independents Call on CNN & MSNBC to Host an Independent Presidential Debate

With the presidential election devolving into non-stop personal attacks and the debates serving as a showcase for the latest round, IndependentVoting.org is circulating a petition that calls on *MSNBC* and *CNN* to host a debate for the independent candidates Gary Johnson, Jill Stein and Evan McMullin.

The petition reads in part:

We, the undersigned, want to see and hear from the independent presidential candidates Gary Johnson, Jill Stein and Evan McMullin in a televised debate.

We represent the millions of Americans who are gravely concerned about the shortcomings of our political process so widely exposed in this presidential election: the exclusion of millions from voting in the primary elections because they were independent, the super-delegate system, and the control of the debate process by the Commission on Presidential Debates whose criteria for inclusion is designed to exclude independent candidates.



In this political climate, we call on CNN and MSNBC to host a Presidential debate with the three independent candidates.

Sign the Petition today!

Anti-Corruption Awards Honor Community Leaders

The New York City Independence Clubs held its 16th Annual Anti-Corruption Awards fundraiser in New York City on October 5th, raising over \$50,000 and honoring activists and civic leaders in the movement against political corruption and partisanship. The theme of the event was *"It's Up to the People."*

Awardees this year included: **Thom Reilly** and **Joseph Garcia** from the ASU Morrison Institute for Public Policy. For the past year, IndependentVoting.org has been partnering with the Morrison Institute in developing cutting edge research on the profile and role of the independent voter in Arizona. On November 16, the Morrison Institute's prestigious State of the State conference is being co-sponsored by IndependentVoting.org and will focus on the health of our democracy and the role of the independent voter.



Thom Reilly, Dr. Lenora Fulani and Jackie Salit

Gwen Samuel, a community and education activist in Meriden, Connecticut. She founded three organizations and has championed two parent empowerment bills that became Connecticut state law. When the Congressional Black Caucus adopted a resolution against open primaries asserting that opening the primaries to independents was hurtful to the African American community, Gwen wrote a very strong editorial decrying their anti-democratic position.

Malcolm Burn, a community activist and award-winning music producer from Ulster County, New York. He was part of the

Bernie Sanders campaign and was dismayed that closed primaries excluded so many voters from supporting him. He joined the outreach coordinating committee of New Yorkers for Primary Reform. Malcolm collected hundreds of signatures on a Letter to the DNC and RNC Rules Committees that asked them to open the presidential primaries and traveled to the Democratic Party National Convention when the petitions were presented to the DNC Rules Committee.

Denyce Harris and Brenda Temple -

leading community organizers with the **Committee for Independent Community Action (CICA)**. Working with Dr. Lenora Fulani, they have been the top petitioners for the CICA petition to stop the gentrification plan proposed by the NYC Housing Authority.

The **Nicholas S. Johnson Independent Spirit Award**, created in 2012 in honor of the former Bronx Independence

Chairman, Nicholas S. Johnson, was presented to Nia Rose (Harlem) and Steven Guarin (Bronx) for their exemplary volunteer work.



Awardees and presenters

Salit at Forum: Political Revolution or Revolution in Politics?

Jackie Salit was the special guest at a forum sponsored by the **East Side Institute** called "Political Revolution or Revolution in Politics."

Some of the issues examined by Salit in questions posed by Harry Kresky, IndependentVoting.org's counsel and Christine Helm, Director of Enterprise Studies and Digital Design at the Fashion Institute of Technology /State University of New York, and Institute staff member, were: how do you bring together a new third force?; How can we transfer power from the political parties to the people?; Are we in the middle of a paradigm shift?; How do we develop our movement and its participants?



Jackie Salit, Christine Helm, Harry Kresky

Said Salit: *"I think people can only give expression to what it's possible to give expression to. Part of what we're living through right now is a time when there's a lot that people feel, think, want to say about their lives, their communities, their values that they want to live by, and there are very limited ways of giving expression to that. And I think we're seeing that gap."*

You can listen to the full audio here.

Coalition of Independent Voters in Colorado Endorses Props 107 and 108

Read the endorsement by Gwen Ballard, founder of Coalition of Independent Voters of Colorado, for Propositions 107 and 108:

Dear Friends,

The Coalition of Independent Voters in Colorado ("CIVIC") is pleased to endorse Propositions 107 and 108, which would replace the caucus system with a presidential primary and allow unaffiliated voters to participate in primaries.

Together, Propositions 107 and 108 will allow more than one million unaffiliated voters in Colorado to fully participate in the democratic process. These propositions are a critical step in allowing access to ALL levels of the electoral process for unaffiliated voters, who are currently shut out of a crucial stage of the process while constituting almost 38 percent of the registered voters in Colorado.

Given the overwhelming disapproval among Colorado voters of the way the caucus process has operated, and the exclusion of more than one third of Colorado voters from a crucial stage of "the process," these measures make our primary system fairer and more inclusive. CIVIC urges ALL Coloradans to vote yes on Propositions 107 and 108. Let's allow EVERYONE to decide who will represent us. ALL of us.



Sincerely,

Gwen Ballard
Founder, CIVIC

Yes on 5 - Maine's Ranked Choice Initiative

Kyle Bailey is the campaign manager for the Yes on 5 campaign, the **Ranked Choice Initiative** that will be on Maine's ballot on November 8. **Joe Pickering**, IndependentVoting.org activist in Bangor, sought Kyle out to ask him about the campaign:

How is the Campaign Going?

Kyle: More than 500 elected officials, business and labor leaders, and clergy from across Maine have **endorsed** Question 5 to enact Ranked Choice Voting. More than 400 **letters** to the editor have been published in a majority of Maine's newspapers. The Yes On 5 campaign has organized more than 120 house parties and hundreds of demonstrations across the state. Question 5 is broadly supported by Democrats, Republicans, Independents, Greens, and Libertarians in Maine as the best solution to restore majority rule and give more voice and more choice to voters in elections. **Public polling** shows a 19-point lead for Yes On 5, but we're taking nothing for granted. The Yes On 5 campaign is going up this week with TV ads.



Why do you think this reform is important to independents?

Kyle: Ranked Choice Voting levels the playing field, so candidates with the best ideas – not the biggest bank accounts – have a fighting chance. Ranked Choice Voting gives you the freedom to vote for the candidate you like best, without worrying that you will help to elect the candidate you like least – and without feeling like your vote is "wasted." You never have to vote for the lesser of two evils when there is another candidate you really like. **Click here** to watch a video by Independent Voter Network that explains what Ranked Choice Voting is, how it works, and why it matters in 45 seconds.

Check out this endorsement of Measure 5 by the Portland Press Herald.

Profiles in Independence:

Peter Sabian, Bristol, Rhode Island

Peter Sabian is in his final year of law school at Roger Williams School of Law and a new member of IndependentVoting. Here's a little about Peter's political journey, in his own words:

"I came to the U.S. from Ukraine in 2003 when I was 16. I lived, worked and studied in New York City for 11 years and then moved to Rhode Island for law school. Like many people, I was immediately energized by Bernie's campaign. I phone-banked and canvassed for him; I donated and even joined the class action suit against the Democratic National Committee after it was revealed how much collusion there was between the committee and the media. I decided to become a public interest attorney and focus on providing legal services, alleviating poverty, advocating for voting rights, etc.



During the primaries I came to the dreadful realization that most states did not allow independents to vote. I simply could not believe that there was no affirmative right to vote in this country. Soon

after I realized that the Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act in 2013. I also realized how stringent most of the states' voting requirements were. Even New York, a blue state, has outrageous voting rules that restricted 3 million independents from voting during this past primary.

In 2015 I started getting involved in activism and politics. I joined Wolf Pac - a non partisan organization which was successful in lobbying Rhode Island legislators to pass anti-Citizens United legislation. Next year I and other activists will start working on implementing Ranked Choice Voting in Rhode Island by following in Maine's footsteps.

Just about every day I realize that there are more and more issues to fix in this country. Independents pay for primaries with their taxes, yet they are not allowed to vote in closed primary states. This is certainly just another example of "taxation without representation".

I hope to help IndependentVoting.org give political voice to 41-43% of voters in the United States who are Independents."

In the News

- Jim Morrison, leader of Independents for Arizona, wrote "**None of the Above Should Be on Ballots**," (*Arizona Daily Star*)
- There will be a hearing before the New York State Supreme Court challenging the legality of New York's closed primary system. *The New York Post* alluded to the hearing in this article, "**Lawyer Has Asked A Judge to Subpoena the Trump Kids**."
- "**Would Open Primaries Have Given Us Better Presidential Nominees**," an interview with former Congressman Tim Penny (*Minnesota Post*)
- "**67% of Floridians support moving to open primaries**." Read about it on *FloridaPolitics.com*.
- South Dakota's *Rapid City Journal* editorial board endorsed Amendment V in "**Ours: Election Reform Can Boost Participation**."

Politics for the People Book Club Conference Call this Sunday

This Sunday, October 23 at 7pm, **Politics for the People Book Club** members will join its founder, Cathy Stewart, and Matthew Desmond, author of the book **EVICTED: Poverty and Profit in the American City**, on a conference call where participants will take a look at the housing and eviction crisis in America, the topic of Desmond's book. Book Club members have been sharing their thoughts about the book in a series of posts on the **Politics for the People blog**. Here are a few excerpts:

Ramon Pena, longtime independent activist currently living in New Jersey: It's an honor to write a small piece after reading the book *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*. I have read many books but none has hit as close to home as this one. Why? Because I was evicted from my apartment in 2014 after 20 years of living there. Never a missed rent or late payment. I was evicted because of greed.



Frank Fear, Professor Emeritus, Michigan State University: Desmond's book should make us feel uncomfortable. He helps us confront this "other reality" in vivid and sometimes raw terms....After finishing the book I spent time thinking about the meaning of *Evicted*. I concluded that it's a Call to Arms. We must do more, and do better, as stewards of the commonwealth.

Mary Fridley, Director, Special Projects, East Side Institute, and a longtime independent activist: I have spent much of my adult life doing all I can to end poverty, but reading *Evicted* showed me how easy it still is to relate to it as an abstraction rather than as an

endlessly complex and interconnected industry out of which it is becoming more and more impossible to escape.

An overview of the book prepared by the publisher begins:


"Today, poor families are facing one of the worst affordable housing crises in generations. Many are spending almost all they have to live in decrepit housing in our cities' worst neighborhoods. What it means to be poor in America today is to be crushed by the high cost of housing and evicted when you inevitably fall behind.

In this groundbreaking book, Harvard sociologist and 2015 MacArthur "Genius" award winner Matthew Desmond takes us into Milwaukee to introduce us to eight families on the edge of eviction."

To join the call on Sunday:

**Politics for the People Conference Call
With Matthew Desmond
Sunday, October 23rd at 7 pm EST
Call In Number: 641 715-3605
Access code 767775#**

(You do not need to have read the book to join the call)

A poster for a National Conference Call. At the top is the IndependentVoting.org logo. Below it, the title "National Conference Call" is written in large, bold, dark red letters. A paragraph of text follows: "IndependentVoting.org President Jackie Salit hosts a national conference call every other month for independents around the country. Join her for a special post-election call where she will respond to questions sent in by you about the election, results and the movement for democracy." Below this, the topics "WHAT JUST HAPPENED?" and "IS AMERICA GOING INDEPENDENT?" are listed in bold, dark red letters. The date "Sunday, November 13th, 2016" and the time "4:00 PM EST (3:00 pm CT, 2:00 pm MT, 1:00 pm PT)" are also in bold, dark red letters. At the bottom, the call in number "641-715-3605" and passcode "767775#" are listed. On the right side of the poster is a black and white portrait of Jackie Salit, a woman with short dark hair, wearing a patterned top.

IndependentVoting.org

National Conference Call

IndependentVoting.org President Jackie Salit hosts a national conference call every other month for independents around the country. Join her for a special post-election call where she will respond to questions sent in by you about the election, results and the movement for democracy.

**WHAT JUST HAPPENED?
IS AMERICA GOING INDEPENDENT?**

Sunday, November 13th, 2016
4:00 PM EST (3:00 pm CT, 2:00 pm MT, 1:00 pm PT)

Call in Number: 641-715-3605
Passcode: 767775#




Register here for the Conference Call

Have a question for Jackie Salit?

Send your question to national@independentvoting.org

Save the date!

2017 National Conference of Independents

sponsored by  **IndependentVoting.org**



IndependentVoting.org's
Ninth Biennial
National Conference of
Independents

**Saturday, March 18th
New York City**

FOR MORE INFO:
National@IndependentVoting.org

Are you a member of IndependentVoting.org?

We are the grassroots-fueled movement that believes if we're going to get forward-looking policies and develop our country, then we have to change the way our political process functions. Your membership connects you to a national grassroots network working on these critical issues in every state of the country and strengthens our ability to force the process open.

Membership is a one-time \$10 fee (or you can become a sponsor for \$100 which includes membership and a \$90 donation).

Click here to join today!

And help expand additional outreach on social media by making a donation to our advertising campaign. Every \$100 you give allows us to engage 4,500 people with our message on Facebook. **Please Donate here.** Thanks for your generous support!

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Give us a call today!

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